

Partner Guidance:

The Learning Brief

An introduction to our approach to learning, what makes a strong learning brief, and how your work shapes our shared understanding of change.

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01 Our Theory of Change

We are addressing the defining challenges of our time, working at the intersection of climate change, nature loss and social inequality. We are driven by the belief that business, when guided by values, rules and incentives, can be powerful agents for positive change. Our approach combines the catalytic power of philanthropy to work with and through business and industry to advance system change.

Our theory of change can be found on our website (from July 2026). It outlines how the five approaches are expected to contribute to changes that lead to the 2031 outcomes. The approaches and outcomes are provided below.

How We Make Change: Our Five Approaches

Advancing informed policies

We support our partners to amplify their efforts towards creating common standards and compelling incentives as conditions for industry transitions.

Strengthening accountability

We fund efforts that encourage transparency, set clear expectations and hold industry to account for their social and environmental impacts.

Scaling research and innovation

We find and support solutions that have the potential to inform just transitions in our industries of focus.

Cultivating alliances

We convene coalitions and learning networks that share insights, co-create solutions, and enable shared action towards green, fair and inclusive transitions.

Building discourse

Through sharing insights and stories, we aim to explore and challenge assumptions, inspire and encourage diverse perspectives that inform decisions.

Our Destination: 2031 Outcomes

Policymakers and implementors

Governments are supporting and implementing policies, laws and frameworks that encourage financiers, businesses and workers to deliver just industry transitions.

Financial Institutions

Financial institutions are changing their investment and engagement practices, using their money and influence to drive and deliver just industry transitions.

Businesses

Businesses are motivated and changing and adopting models and innovations to deliver just industry transitions.

Workers & Communities

Workers and communities are engaged, influencing and advocating for policies, laws, and frameworks to deliver just industry transitions.

Just Transition

Greening the economy in a way that is as fair and inclusive as possible to everyone concerned, creating decent work opportunities and leaving no one behind.

02 What Makes a Good Learning Brief

- The learning brief is a key moment to capture and make sense of insights from the year.
- There are three layers of support to guide you through this process:
 - The learning brief has a short explanation of each section.
 - This guide has examples of what strong responses can look like.
 - Your Laudes programme manager is ready to answer questions and support your thinking.

Describing your outcomes

We define outcomes as changes (positive or negative) in system dynamics, using the six conditions of systems change put forward by ESG (Kania, Kramer, and Senge, 2018).

Recall the example of an expected outcome that was shared with you in the proposal guidance:

✓ WHO?	✓ WHAT?	✓ WHERE/ON WHAT ISSUE?
Kantamanto Market trader associations	redirect unsellable second-hand garments from landfill through a new sorting and recovery system, increasing reuse and recycling within the market	in the second-hand market in Ghana

Now it is time to **reflect on what has actually happened**.

Here are a few questions to get you started:

- What has changed (or not changed) as a result of the work?
- What you have learned through implementation?
- What evidence or observations help demonstrate progress, challenges, or unexpected outcomes?

<p><i>Evidence</i> <i>Examples</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trader associations have announced or documented the pilot program • A sorting or recovery process for unsellable garments has been established 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships have been formed with recycling, upcycling, or textile recovery organizations • Initial volumes of garments diverted from landfill have been documented
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Example 1

Expected Outcome

WHAT WAS THE EXPECTED OUTCOME? (One sentence. Target 15-30 words. Maximum 40.)

Kantamanto Market trader associations in Ghana redirect unsellable second-hand garments from landfill through a new sorting and recovery system, **increasing reuse and recycling within the market.**


- Fully achieved Progressing with insights Delayed and adapted N/A

WHAT CHANGES ACTUALLY HAPPENED?

Trader associations launched a small-scale pilot to sort unsellable garments. Early results showed that **some materials could be redirected for reuse or informal recycling**, and traders **reported increased awareness of alternatives to disposal**. However, the **volume processed remained limited due to capacity constraints**.

WHAT KEY FACTORS CONTRIBUTED TO THE PROGRESS OR CHALLENGES?

Progress was supported by **strong engagement from trader associations and partnerships with local organisations** who helped coordinate the pilot. However, challenges included **limited infrastructure for sorting and recycling, time constraints for traders, and uncertainty around the financial viability** of recovering lower-quality garments. Feedback from traders also highlighted the **need for clearer incentives to continue their participation**.

 **Look beyond the numbers**

Different kinds of evidence tell different parts of the story. For example, shifts in trust, participation, relationships, confidence, or ways of working can be just as meaningful as quantitative results.

Example 2

Expected Outcome

WHAT WAS THE EXPECTED OUTCOME? *(One sentence. Target 15-30 words. Maximum 40.)*

Affordable housing developers in the UK created standardised tenant information packs to help them better understand retrofit timelines, expected disruption, and energy cost implications, **supporting more informed participation during retrofit projects.**


- Fully achieved Progressing with insights Delayed and adapted N/A

WHAT CHANGES ACTUALLY HAPPENED?

Affordable housing developers in the UK created standardised tenant information packs, but **paused the wider rollout** due to changes in guidance related to energy costs. A **shorter version of the pack was introduced** across several retrofit sites instead. **Tenants** said they had a **clearer understanding of retrofit timelines and expected disruption**, and **contractors used the materials to respond more consistently to resident questions during implementation.**

WHAT KEY FACTORS CONTRIBUTED TO THE PROGRESS OR CHALLENGES?

Progress was supported by our **strong existing relationships with housing developers, contractors, and tenant groups**, which helped us test and refine communication materials during implementation. However, **retrofit delivery pressures, limited staff capacity, and changes in guidance related to energy costs** led us to pause the wider rollout. In response, we focused first on materials that could still be used confidently while continuing to revise the remaining content and build staff capacity.

 **Think broadly about change**

Consider backsliding as an example. In complex or fast-changing contexts, maintaining protections, commitments, or momentum can also be a meaningful outcome.

GESI Outcomes

If your initiative has Gender Equity and Social Inclusion goals, focus on what is most relevant to your work this year. These questions can help support your thinking:

Which groups are most affected by the transition you are working on?

- Example*
- Informal workers or supply chain workers at risk of job loss or income instability
 - Women or migrant workers with limited access to decision-making spaces

How have the perspectives or priorities of transition-affected groups informed the work?

- Example*
- Offering translation, childcare, or compensation for participation
 - Creating ongoing feedback loops rather than one-off engagement moments

Did the work change in response to the perspectives raised by transition-affected groups?

- Example*
- Shifting programme timelines or delivery methods based on community input
 - Adjusting interventions to better reflect local priorities or constraints

Example: A GESI Outcome

Local government authorities in India started incorporating priorities identified by two women-led community organisations into climate adaptation funding and local resilience planning discussions, opening new channels for ongoing engagement with groups traditionally underrepresented in adaptation planning.

Use the same outcome structure, with a GESI lens

GESI outcomes are framed in the same way as other outcomes: as observable changes in behaviour, practice, capacity, relationships, or conditions. These changes may relate to participation, influence, representation, access to resources, decision-making power, recognition, or inclusion.

Context Monitoring

When you reflect on the changes in the external environment that may affect your work, goals, stakeholders, or ability to achieve your outcomes, this may include shifts in:

- policies and legislation
- politics and power relations
- economic and social norms, narratives, behaviors, and practices
- resources, technologies, and funding landscapes



Here is an example:

Rising temperatures in Southern Europe are creating heat stress risks for agricultural workers, especially for migrants on family-run farms where workplace protections are limited.

This is increasing public attention on how vulnerable workers are included in climate adaptation and transition planning and creating positive momentum for more inclusive adaptation strategies.

A weak context and strong context example for comparison:

HOW IS THE CONTEXT EVOLVING? ANY DEVELOPMENTS GIVING HOPE OR CONCERN?

✘	<p>Housing pressures are increasing in many contexts, with policymakers placing greater emphasis on accelerating new builds. While sustainability remains an important consideration, it can be challenging to balance these priorities.</p>
<i>What's missing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What specific context or geography? • What exactly is changing, how do we know, and who is most affected by it? • Why does this matter for your work specifically?
✔	<p>Urgent housing emergencies are crowding sustainability off political agendas. Policymakers often prioritize the speed and volume of new builds over long-term climate or social value. This creates a more challenging environment for advancing low-carbon and inclusive housing approaches.</p>
<i>Why this works</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a specific development with a clear short term/long term tension. • Why the context matters to your work is described.

Reflecting on your organisational resilience together

Your resilience reflection is designed to be an exploratory conversation with your Laudes programme manager. It is not a test or performance review. We are here as a thought partner to help you see and celebrate what your organisation is doing well, and to offer support where it would be most meaningful to you. These conversations often surface insights, tensions, or opportunities that can help organisations move forward in practical ways.

For Example

Key Insight: Strong programme results do not always reflect organisational capacity.

Your organisation ran a successful communication campaign this year. The campaign reached thousands of people, informed public debate, and received media attention. Based on these observations, you consider rating your organisation as “*conducive*” in communication & storytelling, strength of partnerships, and strategic clarity on the resilience rubric. However, when you reflect more deeply, you realize:

- The communications work was mostly done by one staff member who recently left.
- The partnerships were only built for this one campaign, not sustained collaboration.
- Your organisation does not have a clear long-term communications strategy.

In conversation, you and your programme manager might identify opportunities to strengthen longer-term resilience, such as strengthening internal systems, sustaining partnerships, or sharing responsibilities across the team.

For Example

Key Insight: When you're deep in the work, it's easy to miss how far you've come.

Your organisation does not have a formal policy or documented framework for staff wellbeing or GESI principles, so you consider rating yourself as “*unconducive*” in these areas. However, your programme manager reminds you:

- Even during your most intense workloads, turnover was low and your team stayed together.
- Three of your five team members in decision-making roles come from communities directly affected by your work.
- When a team member flagged that your meeting schedule was not working for caregivers, you changed it within a week.

In conversation, you and your programme manager may select these as existing strengths to build on and work to formalise practices that are already supporting staff wellbeing and inclusion.



03 How We Learn Together

AT THE GRANT LEVEL

Your PM uses your brief to:

- Understand how your work is progressing
- Identify barriers and enabling conditions
- Guide strategic conversations with you
- Determine where adaptation or support is needed

AT THE SYSTEMS LEVEL

Laudes uses insights across all partners to:

- Understand what industry conditions support, slow, or stop progress
- Identify patterns across grants and contexts
- Strengthen learning about how change happens in the system
- Inform strategy adjustments over time

What comes back to you



Learning Resources

Annual insights from across the system, shared back with partners to support your own thinking and strategy.



Sensemaking Sessions

At key moments, we may invite selected partners to discuss and learn collectively from what is emerging in your context and across industries.



Annual Review and Planning

Our foundation-wide year in review keeps you informed of how we're thinking, and our annual planning process is where this year's learning becomes next year's strategy.

What's next

We encourage you to use this guide as a starting point for your learning brief and a more personalized conversation with your programme manager. It is designed to give you a sense of where your work goes and how we use it. We want you to feel a part of this process. The contributions you make inspire and teach us in meaningful ways.

We hope understanding how they feed into something bigger inspires you too.